

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ALUMINUM IN MARCH 1998

Domestic primary aluminum production in March was 312,408 metric tons. The average daily production rate was 10,078 tons, slightly higher than that of the previous month and 2% above the rate for March 1997.

The monthly average U.S. market price of primary aluminum ingot decreased from 70.4 cents per pound in February to 69.2 cents per pound in March, according to *Platt's Metals Week*. According to *American Metal Market*, the buying price range for processed aluminum used beverage can (UBC) scrap held steady at 56 to 58 cents per pound during the month. According to Resource Recycling's *Container Recycling Report*, the monthly average transaction price for aluminum UBC's decreased from 57.3 cents per pound in February to 56 cents per pound in March.

U.S. Trade

Export data for the month of February were not available at the time of this publication. They will be included in next month's report.

National Defense Stockpile (NDS) Sale

On April 24, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) announced the sale of 323 tons (356 short tons) of aluminum metal from the NDS. The value of the metal sold was \$499 thousand. This exhausts the NDS aluminum inventory and there will be no further offerings (Defense Logistics Agency, 1998).

1997 UBC Recycling Rate

According to data jointly released by the Aluminum Association Inc., the Can Manufacturers Institute, and the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries Inc., 66.8 billion aluminum beverage cans were

recycled in the United States during 1997, a new record for the industry. The recycling rate, based on the number of cans shipped during the year, was 66.5%, a 3% increase from the 1996 rate of 63.5%. According to the organizations' press release, aluminum beverage cans produced domestically in 1997 had an average of 54.7% post-consumer recycled content, the highest recycled content percentage of all packaging materials (Aluminum Association Inc., 1998).

Update

The monthly average U.S. market price of primary aluminum ingot decreased to 68.75 cents per pound in April. In early April, the *American Metal Market* buying price range for aluminum UBC's decreased to 52 to 53 cents per pound. The price remained at this level through April 23.

Reynolds Metals Company announced plans to restart its remaining 135,000 tons per year of idled primary aluminum smelter capacity. This includes 41,000 tons at its Massena, NY, smelter and 94,000 tons at its Troutdale, OR, smelter. These restarts are expected to begin in the third quarter and to be substantially completed by the end of 1998 (Reynolds Metals Company, 1998).

References Cited

- Aluminum Association Inc., 1998, Aluminum can recycling rate reaches 66.5 percent: Washington, DC, The Aluminum Association News, March 6, 1998, 4 p.
Defense Logistics Agency, 1998, Stockpile accepts aluminum bids: Ft. Belvoir, VA, Defense Logistics Agency news release, April 24, 1998, 1 p.
Reynolds Metals Company, 1998, Reynolds Metals Company reports first-quarter results: Richmond, VA, Reynolds Metals Company press release, April 16, 1998, 5 p.

TABLE 1
COMPONENTS OF ALUMINUM SUPPLY 1/

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Primary production	Secondary recovery 2/			Imports for consumption			Total new supply 3/	Total stocks end of period 4/
		New	Old	Total	Metals and alloys, crude	Plates, sheets, bars, etc.	Total		
1997: p/	3,603	2,020	1,720 r/	3,740	2,060	561	2,620	9,970	1,880
1997:									
March	307	169	150	319	209	48	257	883	1,810
April	295	169	151	320	196	48	244	859	1,810
May	304	174	147	321	198	49	247	872	1,800
June	296	164	145	309	167	47	214	819	1,810
July	305	176	147	323	157	51	208	836	1,830
August	304	174	144	318	152	47	199	821	1,820
September	294	173	142	315	150	47	196	805	1,820
October	307	174	150	324	175	47	222	854	1,830
November	298	162	135 r/	298	146	50	196	791 r/	1,860
December	310	149 r/	126 r/	275 r/	222	49	270	855 r/	1,880
Jan.-Mar.	890	500	437	936	501	127	629	2,460	1,810
1998:									
January	309	149 r/	128 r/	277 r/	220	54	274	860 r/	1,900 r/
February	280	144 r/	127 r/	271 r/	204	46	250	801	1,870
March	312	145	128	272	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jan.-Mar.	902	437	383	820	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

p/ Preliminary. r/ Revised. NA Not available.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits, except "Primary production"; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Metallic recovery from purchased, tolled, or imported scrap, expanded for full coverage of industry.

3/ Primary production, secondary recovery, and imports for consumption.

4/ Includes scrap; data from Current Industrial Reports, Series M33D, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 2
ESTIMATED FULL COVERAGE CONSUMPTION OF AND METALLIC RECOVERY FROM PURCHASED
NEW AND OLD ALUMINUM SCRAP 1/

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Secondary smelters		Integrated aluminum companies		Independent mill fabricators		Foundries		Other consumers		Total	
	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery
1997: p/	1,720	1,320	1,460	1,290 r/	1,110	1,020 r/	107	94	7	7	4,400	3,740
1997:												
March	142	109	132	116	94	87	7	6	(2/)	(2/)	376	319
April	144	111	129	114	95	88	7	7	1	1	376	320
May	143	110	124	110	100	93	8	7	1	1	376	321
June	143	110	125	111	89	82	7	6	1	1	363	309
July	144	110	129	114	98	91	8	7	1	1	379	323
August	143	110	119	105	101	94	10	9	1	1	374	318
September	144	111	118	105	94	87	14	12	1	1	370	315
October	146	112	123	109	97	89	14	12	1	1	381	324
November	143 r/	110	109	97	88 r/	82	10	8	1	1	351 r/	298
December	144	111	108 r/	96 r/	65 r/	60 r/	9	8	(2/)	(2/)	326 r/	275 r/
Jan.-Mar.	425	326	375	332	279	258	21	18	1	1	1,100	936
1998:												
January	146	112	114 r/	102 r/	60 r/	55 r/	8	7	(2/)	(2/)	328 r/	277 r/
February	144	111	105	93 r/	65	60	8	7	(2/)	(2/)	322 r/	271 r/
March	145	112	104	92	67	62	8	7	(2/)	(2/)	324	272
Jan.-Mar.	435	335	323	287	192	177	24	21	1	1	974	820

p/ Preliminary. r/ Revised.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Less than 1/2 unit.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF AND RECOVERY FROM PURCHASED
NEW AND OLD ALUMINUM SCRAP IN MARCH 1998 1/

(Metric tons)

	Consumption		Calculated metallic recovery	
	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage
Secondary smelters	121,000	145,000	93,200	112,000
Integrated aluminum companies	104,000	104,000	92,000	92,000
Independent mill fabricators	56,100	67,300	51,600	61,900
Foundries	6,280	7,540	5,500	6,600
Other consumers	311	373	311	373
Total	287,000	324,000	243,000	272,000

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

TABLE 4
PURCHASED AND TOLL-TREATED ALUMINUM-BASE SCRAP AND SWEATED PIG IN
MARCH 1998 1/

(Metric tons)

	Stocks, opening	Net receipts 2/	Melted or consumed	Stocks, closing
New scrap:				
Solids	20,500 r/	73,800	71,500	22,700
Can stock clippings	4,370 r/	21,000	20,000	5,310
Other clippings	7,360 r/	15,300	15,400	7,250
Borings and turnings	5,800 r/	19,900	19,800	5,840
Dross and skimmings	2,930	27,800	27,900	2,900
Total new scrap	40,900 r/	158,000	155,000	44,000
Old scrap:				
Used casting, sheet, and clippings	31,700 r/	54,500	54,800	31,400
Aluminum-copper radiators	1,290 r/	1,420	1,470	1,240
Used cans (shredded, loose, baled)	25,300 r/	68,300	70,300	23,300
Fragmentized shredder (auto shredder)	W	W	W	W
Other	1,140	5,480	5,310	1,310
Total old scrap	59,400 r/	130,000	132,000	57,200
Sweated pig	1,330	780	780	1,330
Total all classes	102,000 r/	288,000	287,000	103,000

r/ Revised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Other."

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

TABLE 5
ALUMINUM ALLOYS PRODUCED AT SECONDARY SMELTERS
IN THE UNITED STATES 1/ 2/

(Metric tons)

	Stocks, opening r/	Production Mar.	Net shipments Mar.	Stocks, closing	Production Jan.-Mar. 3/	Net shipments Jan.-Mar. 3/
Die cast alloys:						
13% Si, 360, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	3,130	7,020	6,920	3,240	19,800	20,100
380 and variations	12,400	39,800	39,900	12,300	120,000	120,000
Sand and permanent mold:						
95/5 Al-Si, 356, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	13,100	1,960	1,960	13,100	5,780	5,800
No. 319 and variations	3,080	10,900	11,100	2,950	32,800	32,900
F-132 alloy and variations	1,990	3,940	3,940	1,990	11,800	11,700
Al-Zn alloys	453	225	225	453	674	674
Al-Si alloys (0.6% to 2.0% Cu)	196	802	802	196	2,410	2,410
Al-Cu alloys (1.5% Si, max.)	60	77	77	60	231	231
Other 4/	3,210	7,670	8,030	2,850	22,700	22,800
Wrought alloys:						
Extrusion billets	5,930	13,200	13,100	6,000	38,700	38,600
Total all alloys	43,600	85,600	86,000	43,200	255,000	255,000
Less:						
Primary aluminum consumed	XX	4,700	XX	XX	14,400	XX
Primary silicon consumed	XX	6,650	XX	XX	19,900	XX
Other alloying ingredients consumed	XX	414	XX	XX	1,240	XX
Net metallic recovery from aluminum scrap and sweated pig consumed in production of secondary aluminum ingot 5/	XX	73,800	XX	XX	219,000	XX

r/ Revised. XX Not applicable.

1/ Excludes integrated aluminum companies.

2/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

3/ Includes revised data from previous months.

4/ Includes alloys No. 12, Al-Mg, Al-Si-Cu-Ni, aluminum-base hardeners, variations of these alloys, plus other aluminum alloys.

5/ No allowance made for melt-loss of primary aluminum and alloying ingredients.

TABLE 6
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ALUMINUM IN FEBRUARY 1998 1/

(Metric tons)

Country	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc.		Scrap		Total	
	Feb.	Jan.-Feb.	Feb.	Jan.-Feb.	Feb.	Jan.-Feb.	Feb.	Jan.-Feb.
Argentina	1,960	3,040	58	150	34	581	2,050	3,770
Australia	675	2,830	120	249	--	--	795	3,080
Bahrain	--	--	1,030	2,710	--	--	1,030	2,710
Belgium	252	288	468	1,170	20	40	740	1,500
Brazil	35	668	8	49	323	415	367	1,130
Canada	104,000	220,000	25,200	53,200	19,900	38,700	150,000	312,000
Croatia	--	--	37	94	--	--	37	94
Czech Republic	--	--	24	24	--	--	24	24
France	12	24	1,060	2,270	541	893	1,610	3,190
Germany	102	386	4,560	8,210	39	75	4,700	8,680
Ghana	--	--	--	243	565	565	565	809
Hungary	--	--	324	481	--	--	324	481
Italy	--	--	360	850	20	222	380	1,070
Japan	(2/)	16	1,490	2,460	35	99	1,530	2,570
Korea, Republic of	--	--	11	20	324	595	335	616
Mexico	75	131	948	2,090	7,390	14,100	8,410	16,300
Netherlands	(2/)	116	242	559	137	489	379	1,160
Norway	107	159	1	274	--	--	108	433
Russia	76,900	161,000	1,880	6,920	1,760	3,050	80,500	171,000
Slovakia	19	73	--	--	--	--	19	73
Slovenia	--	--	323	668	--	--	323	668
South Africa	4,660	4,660	292	750	59	96	5,010	5,500
Spain	--	--	533	2,060	449	812	981	2,870
Sweden	--	--	404	724	75	221	480	945
Switzerland	--	--	134	393	--	--	134	393
Ukraine	2,170	4,930	--	--	122	501	2,290	5,440
United Arab Emirates	797	797	--	--	80	183	877	980
United Kingdom	93	1,340	1,430	3,130	1,140	1,860	2,650	6,320
Venezuela	8,640	19,100	2,260	4,200	1,540	1,980	12,400	25,300
Other	3,470	3,920	2,530	5,770	5,740	11,000	11,700	20,700
Total	204,000	424,000	45,800	99,700	40,300	76,500	290,000	600,000

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Less than 1/2 unit.

Source: Bureau of the Census.